Welcome to Story Station U on 89-3 WGSU, Geneseo's Voice of the Valley, your local radio broadcast where campus life meets American headlines! I'm your host, Madilyn Becker, and I'll be breaking down the recent news that could change your weekend plans- or maybe your future! You can follow along with tonight's script and check all of my sources online at the WGSU website!

Thank you for joining me tonight! I hope everyone had a restful, enjoyable holiday season and SUNY Geneseo students had a wonderful winter break! This week, Story Station U presents an in-depth look at the first week of Donald Trump's presidency. Let's begin!

Beginning tonight's show is a look at executive orders that Donald Trump issued in his first week as president. In his first day as president alone, Donald Trump issued twenty-six executive orders, and has signed more since then. We don't have all night, so let's examine the few most notable.

First up: his orders surrounding immigration laws in the U.S. President Trump has signed several executive orders regarding immigration in the U.S., including ones to end birthright citizenship, and to begin the mass-deportations that the president promised during his campaign. Since the 14th amendment was ratified in 1868, any person who has been born in the United States has been granted citizenship. The amendment refers to this as ''the right of soil''. After winning the 2024 presidential election, Donald Trump told NBC News, "We're going to end that because it's ridiculous". However, because birthright citizenship is engraved into the constitution, ending it poses difficulties. Already, twenty-two states have sued the federal government over this order. The order is stated to begin on February 19th, 2025, meaning that any child born on, or after, this date whose parents are illegal immigrants, or hold temporary visas, would not be granted citizenship upon their birth. However, it has been temporarily blocked by a federal judge. District Judge John Coughenour called it ''blatantly unconstitutional". This order by President Trump is likely to lead to a battle in United States courts. A constitutional amendment could repeal the 14th amendment with less complications than the president's executive order. However, that would require a two-thirds vote in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Three-quarters of U.S. states would also have to agree to ratify the amendment. It is challenging to determine exactly how many children this order, if made official, would affect. According to Pew Research Center, approximately 250,000 babies were born to unauthorized immigrant parents in 2016. More recently, in 2022, there were about 8.3 million illegal immigrants in the American workforce. So although it is hard to determine an exact number of people who would be affected by President Trump's actions, officials are sure it would be extremely large.

President Trump issued a second significant executive order regarding immigrants in the U.S. He appealed the policies preventing The U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement agency, more commonly known as ICE, from raiding and arresting immigrants in schools, hospitals, and churches. These spaces, and others, including domestic violence shelters, were previously protected from ICE raids as they were named ''sensitive areas". The Department of Homeland Security released a statement saying that this order allows ICE officers to carry out

their duties of deporting ‘’criminal aliens”. Many lawmakers, U.S. citizens, and undocumented immigrants quickly criticized the president, slamming his instructions for officers to raid sensitive areas. Texas representative Joaquin Castro referred to the president in a recent presser, saying “Donald Trump says he’s targeting criminals,” and continuing to ask “who he believes among those kids is a criminal sitting in a first grade classroom.” New York representative, Nydia Velazquez called Donald Trump ‘’heartless.” At a church in Chicago, Reverend Kenneth Phelps has been helping immigrants find housing and resources, and is now saying that he feels “it’s kind of a war” against ICE and the Trump administration.

Up next is President Trump’s executive orders regarding U.S. energy usage and climate. He quickly signed an executive order removing the United States from the Paris climate agreement. The United Nations describes the agreement as an international treaty aimed at fighting climate change. Its goal is to limit levels of global warming to 1.5 degrees celsius, or 34.7 degrees fahrenheit, above pre-industrial levels. The Paris agreement lays out ‘’a five year cycle of increasingly ambitious climate actions”, according to the United Nations. There are 195 parties involved in this agreement, and since 2020, countries have been submitting their own climate action plans to show their dedication to, and actions towards, fighting climate change. Amidst the many severe climate disasters that the U.S. has seen recently, such as the Los Angeles wildfires and hurricanes destroying several southern states, Donald Trump, controversially, pulled out of the Paris agreement. He took this same action during his presidency in 2017. Then, in 2021, former president Joe Biden re-entered the U.S. into the agreement. Also on the topic of energy, President Trump signed an executive order declaring a ‘’national energy emergency”. This action allows him to invoke the National Emergencies Act, and enables the federal government to intensify efforts to use fossil fuels, oil, and natural gas as energy sources. This provides another stark contrast between the Trump administration and the recent Biden administration. Former president Biden used U.S. citizens’ tax dollars to contribute to renewable energy sources and decrease America’s reliance on oil and gas industries. President Trump told Americans that the U.S. will soon “drill, baby, drill’’ in his inauguration speech. This act of declaring a national energy emergency follows through on that promise. The president also stated “America is a rich nation” and that drilling oil and relying on it for energy, will ‘’keep things that way”. However, the president faced much controversy surrounding this national energy emergency. The Center for Economic and Policy Research, or CEPR, explains that this means that the oil industry will no longer have to “worry about government regulations about how and where to drill”. Also according to the CEPR, these fewer regulations, in theory, mean more oil, which would decrease gas prices and boost the economy. However, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, as well as the CEPR, say that the U.S. is already producing oil at record levels. Therefore, this means that more drilling may not necessarily boost the economy much. The CEPR also explains that more oil production would increase greenhouse gas emissions, intensify global warming.

Another significant executive order issued by President Trump, was the order to eliminate all DEI programs in the federal government. CBS published an article explaining DEI saying that, DEI stands for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The article goes on to explain that the program began with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This act banned employment discrimination

based on sex, gender, religion, and other identities. DEI programs gained support in 2020 as much of the United States fought for justice for victims of, and the dismantling of, systemic racism. DEI in the workplace can include companies creating support groups for people of the same class, gender, race, etcetera, or seeking to foster inclusion and diversity in company hires. David Glasgow, the executive director of the Meltzer Center for Diversity defends DEI saying that it promotes finding ‘’the best people for the job” and makes sure companies are ‘’promoting the best people”. However, many of President Trump’s conservative supporters, including conservative political influencer Charlie Kirk, criticize DEI programs, saying they don’t work the way supporters of DEI claim that they do. Kirk wrote a statement on X, formerly known as Twitter, regarding the dismantling of DEI programs. He wrote: “We will have a government based on merit, not race”. With Donald Trump’s executive order, federal agencies are expected to submit a list of federal DEI positions and develop a plan to reduce the number of DEI workers.

Another action that President Trump took during his first week of office, that was not an executive order, includes the pardons of over 1,500 people involved in the January 6th, 2021 attack on the U.S. capitol. This comes after Trump’s vice president, JD Vance, told Fox News that violent offenders in the attack would not be granted pardons. According to AP News, Donald Trump’s pardons did include offenders who beat law enforcement officers during the attack.

Donald Trump has also mentioned ideas for beyond America, specifically, in space. Months ago, the president named Elon Musk, founder of SpaceX, a space technology company, to his cabinet as the leader of The Department of Government Efficiency. In his recent inauguration speech, Donald Trump said, “we will pursue our Manifest Destiny into the stars , launching American astronauts to plant the stars and stripes on the planet Mars”. Musk, in the audience at the president’s inauguration, cheered and gave a two thumbs up at this comment. NASA is currently working on technology that could send Americans to Mars by 2030, but they have named several challenges. These include the fact that it would be roughly a three year trip, temperatures on Mars can drop below negative 280 degrees fahrenheit, and the planet’s atmosphere is over 90% carbon dioxide, all according to NASA.

Let’s look at our most recent headline! Just a few hours ago, President Trump released a statement through the White House Press Secretary, Karoline Leavitt, about the recent drone sightings in New Jersey. The statement revealed “after research and study, the drones that were flying over New Jersey in large numbers were authorized to be flown by the FAA for research and various other reasons”. The president’s statement also admitted the situation worsened due to ‘’curiosity” and that “this was not the enemy”. In December of 2024, several drones were spotted by residents flying in the New Jersey area. The FBI and Department of Homeland Security investigated, but despite their findings that there was nothing suspicious about the aircraft, many Americans worried about the source of these drones. President Trump has now confirmed that these drones were not a threat.

To close out our show tonight, Story Station U presents the weekly good news story! Casey Colvin lives in Los Angeles, California, and was recently told to evacuate his home due to the approaching, devastating wildfires. He did so, but only managed to get one of his two dogs out his house. He and his dog evacuated unharmed, but his second dog, named Oreo, was missing. Colvin returned to his neighborhood when it was deemed safe. He returned to find his house burned, but he cried tears of joy when Oreo emerged from a pile of rubble. Colvin exclaimed "Oh, honey, you're alive!". He thanked firefighters and his helpful neighbor who searched for, and found, Oreo. The successful search was a beacon of hope and moment of life for Colvin amidst the devastation. You can be a beacon of hope for others impacted by the L.A wildfires. Savethechildren.org is accepting online donations to get impacted children food, support, and shelter. Lafoodbank.org and projecthope.org are also both accepting donations online to provide victims with food, hygiene kits, and shelter.

That's our top headlines for tonight, but the world never stops spinning and news never stops breaking, so join me again next Tuesday, same place, same time for all of your top headlines! Don't forget you can read my script and see all of tonight's sources on WGSU's website! And keep an eye for updates on how you can get in contact with me and provide feedback and ideas for Story Station U! Thank you again for joining me tonight. I'm your host, Madilyn Becker, and I'll talk to you next week on 89-3 WGSU, Geneseo's Voice of the Valley!